



**HB1312 - Public Safety - Resilient Maryland Revolving Loan Fund - Alterations
Testimony before the Senate Budget and Taxation Committee**

Hearing March 29, 2022

Position: Favorable

Mr. Chair, Mr. Vice Chair and members of the committee, my name is Elizabeth Fixsen, and I represent the 750+ members of Indivisible Howard County. Indivisible Howard County is an active member of the Maryland Legislative Coalition (with 30,000+ members). We are providing written testimony today in **support of HB1312**, altering the Resilient Maryland Revolving Loan Fund (RMRLF) to provide for loans to be made to the Department of Housing and Community Development and local governments; authorizing the Fund to include money from the Federal Emergency Management Agency; requiring a portion of the Fund to be reserved for the hazard mitigation of buildings; and authorizing loan forgiveness under certain circumstances. We appreciate Delegate Watson's sponsorship of this bill.

The Resilient Maryland Revolving Loan Fund (RMRLF) is modeled after the federal STORM Act and among other things, provides funds to make buildings more resilient to natural disasters, such as floods – which will become more common as climate change worsens. The amendments to RMRLF will provide additional state and local government channels for receiving and distributing funds. It will enable the Fund to access money from FEMA, and it will enable some low-income property owners to be relieved of the burden of full loan repayment.

These changes to the RMRLF will better ensure protection of our property values in the face of mounting climate risks. Preserving property values is essential to maintaining adequate levels of funding for schools and local government services.

Thank you for your consideration of this important legislation.

We respectfully urge a favorable report.

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